

Title: Environmental Public Health Tracking: Health and Environment Linked for Information Exchange, Atlanta (HELIX-Atlanta)

Keywords: HELIX-Atlanta, integration, interoperability, information technology, linkage, network, PHIN, childhood lead poisoning, short-latency cancers, developmental disabilities, birth defects, vital records, respiratory health, age of housing, remote sensing, environmental monitoring

Background: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is coordinating HELIX-Atlanta to provide information regarding the five-county Metropolitan Atlanta Area (Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Fulton, and Gwinnett) via a network of integrated environmental monitoring and public health data systems so that all sectors can take action to prevent and control environmentally related health effects. HELIX-Atlanta is a collaborative effort with local, state, federal, and academic partners.

Objectives: To develop a HELIX-Atlanta Network that can be a tool for accessing interoperable information systems with optional information technology linkage functionality driven by scientific rationale.

Methods: HELIX-Atlanta Partners identified the following HELIX-Atlanta initial focus areas: childhood lead poisoning, short-latency cancers, developmental disabilities, birth defects, vital records, respiratory health, age of housing, remote sensing, and environmental monitoring. HELIX-Atlanta Partners identified information systems containing information on the above focus areas and evaluated them for use in an EPHT network. HELIX-Atlanta coordinators also developed a tool for assessing the PHIN interoperability of the identified information systems.

Results: Specific Databases/Information Systems and measures of “events” were selected for implementation or for development of the HELIX-Atlanta Network. A “PHIN Checklist for HELIX-Atlanta” was developed and used to document the gaps between identified information systems and PHIN guidance.

Conclusions: HELIX-Atlanta provides a model for developing a local EPHT network.

Evaluation: Not applicable

Gabriel Rainisch, M.P.H.

HELIX-Atlanta Assistant Coordinator/EPHT Branch, CDC

Express mail: 6 Executive Park Dr., #1078, Atlanta, GA, 30329

Regular mail: 1600 Clifton rd., Mail Stop E19, Atlanta, GA 30333

GRainisch@cdc.gov

Phone: 404-498-1341 / Fax: 404-498-1313